[0155] As the present invention may be embodied in several forms without departing from the essential characteristics, it should be understood that the above described embodiment should not be considered to limit the present invention but rather should be construed broadly within the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, various modifications and equivalent arrangements are intended to be included within the spirit and scope of the invention.

[0156] Future patent applications may be filed on the basis of or claiming priority from the present application. It is to be understood that the following provisional claims are provided by way of example only, and are not intended to limit the scope of what may be claimed in any such future application.

We claim:

1. A method for a user to operate accounts with a user device when the user device is operably connected to a communications network, the user having at least one transaction account, the method including the steps of:

(a) the user establishing any number of linked transaction accounts and associating same with the at least one transaction account;

(b) the user establishing account operating rules for the at least one transaction account and any linked transaction accounts; and

(c) the user operating a user device to access the at least one transaction account and/or any linked transaction accounts.

2. A method for a user to effect account transactions with a user device operably connected to a communications network wherein the user has previously established at least one transaction account and any number o transaction account, the method including the steps of:

(a) the user establishing account operating rules for the at least one transaction account and/or any linked transaction accounts; and

(b) arranging at least one transfer of value to at least one account; and

(c) causing at least one transaction to occur in accordance with at least one account operating rule.

3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the transaction account and linked transaction accounts are on-line electronic accounts.

4. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein only one of the accounts includes all the necessary details of the user required for accurately establishing the bona-fides of same.

5. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein a linked transaction account is established by an entity other than the user.

6. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the user is initially provided with one or more default linked accounts.

7. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein a user is initially provided with default transaction account operating rules upon the creation of a linked transaction account.

8. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein transaction account operating rules may be established and/or amended by operation of the user device.

9. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the transaction account operating rules to effect any one or more of the following actions:

allow or disallow transactions;

allow or disallow intra-account transfers;

intra-account transfers;

allow or disallow inter-account transfers;

allow or disallow transfers between transaction accounts where the value of units in the respective accounts are of a different type;

allow or disallow transactions on the basis of the value of the transaction;

take any action necessary to enforce statutory or regulatory requirements; or

collect and record information relating to transactions to maintain a historical record of transactions.

10. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the user device is any device operable to connect with, and transfer data over, a communications network.

11. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the user device includes, but is not limited, to any one of the following:

a desk top computer;

a laptop computer;

a personal digital assistance;

a mobile phone; or

a cell phone.

12. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the user device is connected to a communications network and provides the user with a facility to communicate over the communications network by any one or more of the following interfaces:

a web-enabled interface;

an interactive voice response system;

a short messaging service; or

a multi-media messaging service.

13. A user operable account transaction system enabling a user to access at least one transaction account with a user device, the at least one transaction account including links to any number of linked transaction accounts, the system including:

a user communication network gateway operable to provide network access to user devices;

a data storage means operably connected to the communication network for storing the user's account details, the links therebetween and operating rules for each account; and

at least one computer instruction processing device that receives a user account transaction request and executes same in accordance with at least one account operating rule.

14. A user operable account transaction system according to claim 13 wherein a computer instruction processing device maintains a balance of all individual user accounts